

DRAFT ~ SUBJECT TO CHANGE

**ENFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING
SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2020**

A Special Meeting of the Enfield Town Council was called to order by Chairman Ludwick in the Enfield Room of the Enfield Town Hall, 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, Connecticut on Saturday, January 25, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

ROLL-CALL – Present were Councilors Cekala, Hemmeler, Kiner, Ludwick, Mangini, Muller, Riley, Sferrazza, Szewczak and Unghire. Councilor Bosco was absent. Also present were Town Manager, Christopher Bromson; Assistant Town Manager, Kasia Purciello; Town Clerk, Suzanne Olechnicki; Director of Finance, John Wilcox; Chief Technology Officer, Paul Russell; Chief of Police, Alaric Fox; Director of Libraries, Jason Neely; EMS Chief, Erin Riggott; Director of Social Services, Cindy Guerreri; Director of Development Services, Lauren Whitten; Director of Public Works, Donald Nunes and Director of Human Resources, Steve Bielenda

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Mr. Bromson laid out the format of the meeting and spoke about priority items that they should focus on in consideration of budget constraints.

Mr. Wilcox stated the Town can't spend over .002 of the grand list on a project, or \$670,000, without a referendum at this time. He noted the current grand list didn't grow because the Town took a big hit with the Enfield Square. He stated it would be a good thing to just break even. He pointed out it takes a long time to save a lot of money for CIP projects. He noted if the Town is to be reimbursed by the State, the Town would still have to have the total amount budgeted for a project, and that impacts things such as school roofs.

He stated the Town talked to its financial advisor for bonding, and Enfield has a pretty good bond rating, and they would like to maintain that rating. He noted if Enfield gets to a \$16 million dollar debt, that could impact their bond rating. He stated there may be something he can do to push that number down, i.e., instead of actually bonding, perhaps they can roll over bonded anticipation notes. He noted Enfield is actually in pretty good fiscal health right now, but they have a lot of things coming down the pike. He added the current fund balance is also healthy.

Mr. Bromson stated Standard & Poor is very interested in what Enfield is doing with its infrastructure. He pointed out Enfield must be cognizant every year regarding its fund balance. He noted on the other hand if Hartford sees Enfield as being robust, they could cut more aid. He noted they do want Enfield to be robust, but not too robust, so it's really a balancing act.

Chairman Ludwick questioned whether the Roads 2000 Project is paid off, and Mr. Wilcox responded yes.

Chairman Ludwick questioned whether Enfield can increase its bond rating, and Mr. Wilcox stated Standard & Poor is looking for future financial projections, and he is working on that. He stated fiscal planning is important to Standard & Poor. He noted he will also share with them about development going on in Enfield. He stated it will be difficult to increase the bond rating, but they can try to make that happen. Mr. Bromson added it was a Hail Mary to just maintain what they have, but they will push for an increase in Enfield's bond rating. He pointed out that when it came time to buy the bonds, the banks treated Enfield as though it had a triple A bond rating.

Councilor Szewczak stated her belief the Town shouldn't be bonding for roofs, but rather using the sinking fund for that purpose. Mr. Wilcox stated it will take three years to get up to \$675,000 for roof work.

Mr. Bromson spoke about the importance of planning and having a schedule for maintenance and replacement of roofs, boilers, window replacement, etc. He noted before the Town can address any fun projects, they need to get their house in order.

Councilor Sferrazza questioned where the Town invests its money, and Mr. Wilcox responded mostly federal bonds, which are very safe, and the Town has several investment accounts that are closely monitored. He noted the main thing is that the Town doesn't lose any money. Councilor Sferrazza questioned where this information can be found in the budget, and Mr. Wilcox responded the revenue line item, "Investment Income".

Councilor Sferrazza stated he would like a list that has a schedule showing allocated funds for projects and when those allocated funds expire. Mr. Wilcox responded that can be put together, and he noted that is a rolling list.

Mr. Nunes then spoke about road projects. He noted many roads have been done, and the pavement condition index (pci) has been increased. He stated at this time, collector and arterial roads have an 82 pci, and other roads have a 75 pci. He noted that is great compared to other towns, and Enfield wants to keep that ball rolling. He stated they have a list of roads that have not been done, and they have \$17 million dollars' worth of complaints. He noted a brand new, fully reconstructed road costs \$300 per foot, and it's only \$14 to \$28 per foot for pavement preservation.

He stated the future proposed road project would keep the pci the same as it is now. He noted this would be a \$26 million dollar roads project.

Councilor Szewczak questioned how they can get certain roads on that listing, and Mr. Nunes stated they would have to talk about that in their committee. Councilor Szewczak questioned

whether she could email him about a couple roads that are crumbling, and Mr. Nunes responded yes.

Mr. Bromson stated they must have empirical-driven data. He noted people can inform the Town about the condition of their roads, and the Town can look at those roads. Mr. Nunes added they can look at the road listing in detail within the committee.

Mr. Nunes stated \$13.5 million is needed for school roofs and \$7.3 million is needed for Town roofs.

Councilor Szewczak stated the committee only looked at buildings they know the Town is keeping. She noted at this time, they have built-up roofs and EDPM roofs, and they're not going to be doing that kind of roofing anymore. She voiced concern they're not looking at the right pricing.

Councilor Sferrazza stated the evidence room at the Enfield Police Department is leaking, as is the front office.

Mr. Nunes spoke about mandatory CIP costs regarding the following projects:

- Freshwater dam - \$350,000
- Annex handicap pool lift - \$10,000
- Pearl Street Library egress community room - \$100,000
- Nathan Hale lead paint removal - \$25,000
- Hazardville Memorial egress - \$90,000
- JFK PCB monitoring - \$240,000
- DPW equipment - \$366,500
- Crandall underground storage tank removal - \$300,000 (each year, different school)
- Barnard sprinklers - \$475,000
- Finishing school gym floors - \$25,000 yearly cost-one school per year
- Sprinklers-Town Hall - \$250,000
- Sprinklers/alarm upgrades-Lamagna Center (if kept) - \$260,000
- Boiler/chiller water treatment - \$37,492 (yearly equipment maintenance)
- Boiler/chiller water treatment - \$9,912 (yearly cost)
- Roof maintenance - \$72,500 – Senior Center, 100 High Street, Town Hall & EMS
- Generator replacement-police department - \$150,000

Councilor Riley stated her impression PCB work was included in the new building project, and Mr. Nunes stated this relates only to air testing and wipe samples.

Mr. Bromson stated if the Strand Theater and Lamagna Center were demolished, that space could be replaced with housing, which would generate a lot of taxes. He noted it would cost \$1

million dollars to upgrade the Lamagna Center. He pointed out developers have shown interest in housing in this area, and a developer showed interest in the North River Street building.

Councilor Cekala questioned what the Alcorn gymnasium is used for, and Ms. Purciello responded she'd check into that.

Mr. Nunes then spoke about work needed at the transfer station, i.e., a water main and scale work.

Chairman Ludwick stated he is not a fan of artificial turf, and he prefers grass, which is better environmentally.

Chairman Ludwick stated his belief the Town should not be putting a lot of money into the Lamagna Center.

Mr. Neely spoke about the instrument loaning program, which has been started at the Enfield Public Library. He noted they currently have 25 different instruments available. Chairman Ludwick invited Mr. Neely to a future Town Council meeting when he could share this information with the public.

Mr. Neely stated Enfield has a total of 22 playscapes. He noted playscapes typically have a 20-year life cycle, and Enfield needs to get on a rolling cycle for playscape replacements. He noted the LaFayette playscape is in poor condition. He stated there is a condition inventory of all the Town playscapes.

Councilor Muller questioned the possibility of the Town having a splash park, and Mr. Neely noted Mary Keller may have information on that topic. Ms. Purciello added the cost for a splash park is at least \$250,000.

Mr. Bromson stated they will be getting input as to what the public would like to see at Higgins Park.

Chairman Ludwick questioned what can be done with the LaFayette Park, and Mr. Bromson noted that's a potential site for a basketball court, dog park, community garden, etc.

Mr. Bromson stated Enfield has a lot of assets that other communities don't have, i.e., land and the Connecticut River.

Mr. Neely stated there would need to be a new playscape at LaFayette Park. Mr. Bromson stated that could be addressed with very little investment.

Councilor Hemmeler stated last year LaFayette Park was being used to store equipment.

Mr. Russell stated ETV needs some equipment replaced, and new equipment will allow them to videotape special events.

Mr. Russell stated in November there was an outage at Town Hall. He noted a new generator would reduce the cost for a UPS (uninterruptible power supply).

Councilor Sferrazza questioned how much money is spent on annual maintenance fees, and Mr. Russell responded 15% to 25% of the original cost of equipment. He noted annual maintenance keeps everything updated. He pointed out if they don't stay on top of things such as licensing, they become a target.

Chairman Ludwick questioned the cost for Information Technology security, and Mr. Russell indicated he can get that number.

Mr. Bielenda questioned if Mr. Russell is leasing equipment, and Mr. Russell responded yes, they have three-year leases.

Councilor Szewczak questioned the cost of in-house security, and Mr. Russell responded \$1 million dollars annually regarding cloud-based security.

Ms. Guerreri stated Social Services needs a data collection system, and they have been working with Mr. Russell regarding this need. She noted Social Services is largely funded by grants, and they cannot apply for grants unless they have this kind of data system.

Ms. Guerreri stated although there is not a mandate at the moment, they are proposing cameras at ECDC in the Stowe building.

She noted an additional bathroom for ECDC children is needed. Mr. Nunes explained how they would convert an atrium into bathroom space.

Mr. Bielenda agreed cameras would be important at ECDC.

Councilor Riley questioned where the cameras would be at ECDC, and Ms. Guerreri stated they would be installed in eight classrooms.

Chief Fox spoke about an expansion of the joint operations center at a cost of \$188,000. He invited everyone to visit this center.

Chief Fox stated the Town has 44 cameras in 12 locations. He noted the cost per camera is \$4,200, and these cameras operate 24X7, 365 days per year. He stated this program has paid for itself, and they've solved many crimes. He noted he is requesting \$100,000 to install cameras in four new locations.

He spoke about the need for a new crime scene vehicle, which is used in crimes such as murder, arson and sexual assault. He noted their current vehicle is a 1985 Chevy van, which was procured through military surplus. He stated this vehicle often breaks down.

Chief Fox spoke about cameras for police vehicles and body cameras. He noted their in-car cameras are from the mid-1990's and are way past their useful life. He pointed out not having cameras puts them at risk. He went on to note body cameras will eventually be mandated. He noted getting both types of cameras at the same time may prove more fiscally advantageous.

Mr. Bromson stated the subcommittee will look into the police cameras in more detail, but they must at least have in-car cameras. He noted Mr. Russell can look into camera vendors.

Councilor Sferrazza stated he expects there will be more FOI requests for videos from police cameras, and how will that be handled. Chief Fox stated they will handle that in-house.

Councilor Cekala questioned whether anyone will be driving the crime vehicle on a regular basis, and Chief Fox responded no.

Councilor Cekala questioned the cost for just the in-car cameras, and Chief Fox stated if they don't want to buy the body cameras, it will be half the cost for in-car cameras.

Councilor Mangini stated she would like this topic brought back to the Public Safety Committee, so they have more information to make a decision at budget time.

Chairman Ludwick stated his belief all these cameras are too invasive, and he still doesn't see the protection for the officer. He noted he'd like a presentation in public because he's concerned about having cameras everywhere.

Mr. Bromson stated they definitely need in-car cameras, and Chief Fox is presenting both because the body cameras may be mandated in the future, and it might be fiscally advantageous to consider both types of cameras.

Ms. Purciello then spoke about the proposed Higgins Park amenities. She showed a rendering of proposed features, such as a walking trail at a cost of \$640,000 and \$150,000 for lighting. She noted it would cost \$250,000 to remove the pile of soil on this site. She stated they've also consulted with Mr. Russell about possible WI-FI for this area. She noted the softball field could possibly move to the Brooks Brothers open space area. She spoke about different options for a pool on the site.

Councilor Cekala stated she does not want to lose the softball field at the Higgins site. She pointed out that field is used every night in the fall season by the Women's Softball League and the Enfield High School Girls' Softball Team also uses that field. She suggested the walking trail could be accommodated on the Town Green.

Mr. Bromson stated the Town Green is a small area for a walking trail, but that's up to the Town Council. He added if the softball field stays at Higgins, they should still look at accommodating a pool, gymnasium and theater. He noted the Town also needs additional parking in this area.

Councilor Cekala stated the Higgins area also needs bathroom facilities, so people aren't using the Town Hall for that purpose.

Councilor Sferrazza stated Mt. Carmel is privately owned, and people from all over town use the field in that area.

Ms. Whitten stated a walking trail at the Higgins site might not be feasible because it would not be ADA accessible due to the different elevations at that site.

Councilor Riley stated a lot of people would like a splash pool near a regular pool for the use of young children.

Mr. Bromson stated the State of Connecticut will be making a decision on February 3rd regarding possible funding for a train station in Enfield. He noted whatever the outcome of that decision, Enfield will still be going forward with a platform.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.